

REMARKS

The Office action dated May 14, 2007, and the references cited therein have been carefully reviewed in light of the examiner's helpful comments and suggestions.

As a result of the Office action, a number of objections on formal grounds in connection with the specification were raised, which objections have been addressed by the above amendments. No new matter has been added.

Claims 29-33 and 36-44 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Khoobehi. Claims 29, 32, 33, 36, 38, 40, and 41 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Neiheisel. And, claims 29, 34, 35, 36 and 45 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Li in view of Ngoi. These references have been carefully reviewed but are not believed to show or suggest Applicants' invention as now claimed in any manner. Reconsideration and allowance of the pending claims, and examination and allowance of the newly added claims is therefore respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

By the above amendments, claim 29 has been amended to include substantially all the limitations of claim 30 and 34, with the exception of the reference to surface being contaminated with radionuclides in claim 34. Claims 30 and

34, together with apparatus claims 36 through 45 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 29, 31-33, and 35 have also been amended to further define the surface as a concrete surface in order to distinguish the claimed invention over the prior art. Support for this amendment is found on page 1, lines 7-11, and page 12, lines 10-15, of the specification. No new matter has been added.

Referring now to the prior art references, Khoobehi discloses laser sculpting of a cornea and Neiheisel relates to a use of laser radiation to remove an oxide layer from steel strips. Neither Khoobehi nor Neiheisel teaches a method for removing a portion of a concrete surface, as now required by claim 29.

Neiheisel discloses means of obtaining a focused laser line with uniform intensity across its length. However, Neiheisel does not teach the use of a shadow mask for this purpose, as now required by claim 29. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claim 29, and dependent claims 31-33 and 35 are patentably distinguishable over the prior art.

New claims 46-50 are comparable to claims 29, 31-33, and 35, respectively, but recite a natural stone instead of concrete. Support for the natural stone limitation is found, for example, in the specification on page 12, lines 10-15. No new matter has been added. Therefore, claims 46-50 are also believed to be allowable for the same reasons as claims 29,

31-33, and 35.

Each issue raised in the Office action dated May 14, 2007, has been addressed and it is believed that claims 29, 31-33, 35, and 46-50 are in condition for allowance. Wherefore, Applicants respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,
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& MACDONALD

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Behnia', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

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